THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) Rural Tourism Development strategy has been envisaged as a major area of growth, development and employment creation in the 10th Plan.

Development of Temples for Tourist Attraction

2415. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether temples in India are some important places of tourist attraction;

(b) if so, how many such places have been identified by Government which attract tourists from all corners of India and abroad;

(c) whether Government have taken any measures for the promotion, development and maintenance of such places; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Identification of tourist centres including temples is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned.

(c) and (d) Promotion, development and maintenance of the temples is done by separate trusts, boards and local bodies. However, Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance in respect of specific tourism infrastructure projects at various pilgrim centres which are prioritised in consultation with State/Union Territory Governments, Financial assistance is also provided to charitable institutions, trusts, boards and local bodies responsible for the maintenance of the pilgrim centres.

During the last 3 years, 48 tourism infrastructure projects amounting to Rs. 1650.41 lakhs were sanctioned at various pilgrim centres in the country.

Valuables stolen from old Lingaraj Temple in Orissa

2416. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether valuables were stolen from 11th century old Lingaraj Temple in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details of the stolen items; and

(c) the details of enquiry made as to how miscreants could enter into the protected area?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some silver objects, utensils and ornaments were stolen from the temple on 5-11-2001.

(b) The security of the Lingaraj Temple, a centrally protected monument vests with the temple authorities and the State Government. As per the information received from the Government of Orissa, the miscreants entered into the premises of the temple by scaling a wall. The accused persons have been arrested. The State Government have taken steps for strengthening the security arrangements in the temple.

Arrest of the Excise Commissioner and the Managing Director of Flex Industries

2417. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for arrest of the Excise Commissioner and the Managing Director of Flex Industries;

(b) the person(s) who are reported the matter and the basis for such reporting;

(c) whether it is fact that names of several former Ministers and M.Ps are noted in a register under reference; and

(d) who are those persons and what action, if any, is being taken against them ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) The Chief Commissioner of Central Excise, Delhi and Managing Director of Flex Industries, were arrested by the CBI for accepting and offering bribe respectively.

(b) The case was registered by the CBI on the basis of reliable source information.

(c) and (d) It is not clear as to what register is being referred to.